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World Premiere Musical *Twice Upon A Time* by
Legendary British Playwright **Ray Cooney** Debuts at
the Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities
2008 17th Season

(Los Angeles, CA –January 28, 2008) – The [Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities](#) is honored to open their 17th anniversary season at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center with the **World Premiere** of "**Twice Upon A Time**" by legendary British playwright **Ray Cooney**, debuting at the CLOSBC before making its way to London's West End and then on to Broadway.

Twice Upon A Time is directed by Ray Cooney in association with Chris Walker, Composer and Mary Stewart-David –Lyricist with musical direction by Dennis Castellano and choreography by Karen Nowicki.

The previews will be February 13,14,15 and the Gala Opening Night will be Saturday, February 16 at 8 pm.

The cast features Broadway and television veterans Millicent Martin. Misty Cotton, Sam Zeller, Robert Machray. Jennifer Malenke and also Jeffrey Rockwell, Brandon Michael Perkins, Monica Smith, Kevin Symons, Carly Nykanen, and Danny Bolero..

Ray Cooney is one of Britain's most successful playwrights and has been touted as "The Master of Farce." To date he has had 17 plays staged in the West End, including "Run For Your Wife" and "Funny Money." **His work has been translated into more than 40 languages and countless productions have been staged all around the world. He was recognized with an O.B.E. (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in the New Years Honors (2005).** His biggest success, "Run For Your Wife," lasted nine years in London's West End and is its longest-running comedy. "Funny Money" was made into a movie in 2006 starring Chevy Chase, Penelope Ann Miller, Armand Assante and Robert Loggia.

Other works by Cooney include "Not Now Darling," "Move Over Mrs. Markham," "Wife Begins at Forty," "Two into One" and its sequel "Out of Order," "It Runs in the Family," a sequel to "Run For Your Wife" entitled "Caught in the Net" and "Funny Money." He recently co-wrote a farce with his son Michael, "Tom, Dick and Harry." Cooney's farces combine a traditional British bawdiness with structural complication, as characters leap to assumptions, are forced to pretend to be things that they aren't, and often talk at cross-purposes to hilarious effect.

In 1983 Cooney created the Theatre of Comedy Company and became its artistic director. During his tenure it produced more than 20 plays such as "Pygmalion" starring Peter O'Toole and John Thaw, "Loot" and "Run For Your Wife" itself.

Lyricist Mary Stewart-David collaborated previously with Chris Walker on *Around the World in Eighty Days*. She also writes with British composer Denis King and their shows include *Baby on Board* directed by Alan Ayckbourn, *Stepping Out the Musical* directed by Julia McKenzie and *Afterwards* directed by Chris Walker and due to showcase in New York early 2008.

Composer Chris Walker has been associated with many West End and Broadway shows including *Godspell*, *Oliver*, *Side by Side by Sondheim*, *My Fair Lady*, *Tomfoolery*, *Me and My Girl* (Drama Desk Award nomination), *Cabaret*, *Putting It Together* (Drama Desk Award nomination), *The Secret Garden*, *Privates On Parade*, *Ragtime* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* as either Musical Director or Orchestrator. He has provided orchestrations for the movies *Shirley Valentine* and *Impromptu*. He is also a prolific composer and record producer.

Executive Producer James A. Blackman, III said in a statement, "We are extremely honored to debut a much-anticipated musical and even more so that a theatre legend like Ray Cooney and his new work will be an integral part our 2008 season, it is the perfect way to celebrate our 17th anniversary and to kick off our 2008 season of musicals at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center."

Synopsis

1929 Chicago - two rival gangs run the city, and Johnny May is the new kid in town.
2008 Guilford - rising lawyer Steven Tancred is having doubts about marrying his boss' daughter.

Our hero, Steven Tancred, is a hot shot lawyer who lives in Guilford, London and works for a large firm whose clients includes a shopping centre developer. A poor little old lady has the unfortunate luck to be living in a lovely house right in the middle of the development. The nasty developer wants her out, and it's the job of our hero to do it. During hypnotherapy intended to cure his smoking, he discovers a past life more exciting than his present one. As Johnny May, rookie hoodlum in the Prohibition-era Chicago gang of Bugs Moran, he falls for Ruby, Bugs's reluctant showgirl moll. As Steven, he is a decent chap with principles, engaged to his boss's daughter and destined for a long career in the family firm. Will his time-travelling exploits on Doctor Patel's couch lead him to rethink his choices?

Both worlds collide as this comedy swings hilariously back and forth between the 1920s and today, begging the question: "Will his past life experiences give him the courage to do the right thing in this life? Or will his time be up?" Full of toe-tapping tunes and dances and an abundance of laughs, this major new musical from master playwright Ray Cooney harks back to the classic Broadway greats, in a world where gangsters rule with their Tommy guns and every *Guy gets his Doll*.

The largest producing civic light opera in all of Southern California, the Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities (CLOSBC) (<http://www.civiclighthouse.com/>) is a not-for-profit cultural arts institution dedicated to the preservation and presentation of our unique American musical art forms. CLOSBC was founded in 1992 by Executive Director James A. Blackman, III and Director of Finance and Operations Doug Mc Pherson as a producing and educational musical theatre serving the vast populations of South Bay Cities. Through the past 15 years, the company has garnered awards, critiques and audiences while presenting four major musicals per year at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center. They expanded in 1998 to include four smaller plays and musicals at the Hermosa Beach Playhouse (<http://www.hermosabeachplayhouse.com/>). With eight full, professional productions per year, they have achieved the mission of entertaining and serving peoples of all ages, cultures, and abilities who reside in the greater South Bay Region of Los Angeles County.

Calendar:

TWICE UPON A TIME

WORLD PREMIERE MUSICAL EVENT!

February 13 – March 2, 2008

Gala Press Opening: Saturday, February 16 at 8 P.M.

Written and directed by Ray Cooney

Lyrics by Mary Stewart-David and music by Chris Walker

Musical Arrangements by Larry Blank

Producers are James A. Blackman, III (Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities) and Ray Cooney

Associate Producers Stephanie Coltrin and Christopher Beyries.

Musical Director Dennis Castellano

Choreographer Karen Nowicki

Set Design Christopher Beyries

Lighting Design Darrell Clark

Sound Design John Feinstein

Costume Design Karen Cornejo

Production Stage Manager Tim Muldrew

Public Relations and Publicity Pegge Forrest & Associates

Cast includes:

Sam Zeller (Bugs/ Arnold)

Misty Cotton (Ruby/Linda)

Robert Machray (Mr. Pilsworth)

Millicent Martin (Mrs. Clark)

Monica Smith (Mrs. Pilsworth)

Kevin Symons (Jeff Walters)

Danny Bolero (Dr. Patel)

Brandon Michael Perkins – Steven/ Johnny

Jennifer Malenke (Barbara Pilsworth)

Carly Nykanen (Miss Dixon)

Jeff Rockwell (Fingers)

Ensemble includes:

Matt Bezmarevich, Jennifer Brasuell, Chris Ciccarelli, Travis Davidson, Rachel Geneviere, David Gordon. Lloyd Gordon, Merissa Haddad, Carolanne Maranao, Marc Oka, Stephanie Renz, Jesse Rhodus, Glenn Shiroma

Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center

The corner of Aviation and Manhattan Beach Blvd.

Call 310-372-4477 www.civiclighthouse.com

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